

## **POLICY ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)**

<b>Reference number</b>	5P_5.10
<b>Accountable executive manager</b>	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Operations, Digital and AI Systems
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Operations, Digital and AI Systems
<b>Responsible division</b>	Information Technology
<b>Status</b>	Approved
<b>Approved by</b>	Council
<b>Date of approval</b>	19 November 2025
<b>Review date</b>	2028

## **POLICY ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)**

Against the background of the vision to discover new frontiers and opportunities that benefit society, thereby advancing our relevance and impact, the Council of the North-West University (“NWU”, “the university”) adopted this policy on 19 November 2025.

### **1 Interpretation and application**

This policy must be interpreted and applied in a manner consistent with the –

- 1.1 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996;
- 1.2 Higher Education Act, 101 of 1997;
- 1.3 Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 3 of 2000 (PAJA);
- 1.4 Electronic Communications and Transactions Act, 25 of 2002;
- 1.5 Protection of Personal Information Act, 4 of 2013;
- 1.6 Copyright Act, 98 of 1978;
- 1.7 Post-School Education and Training Information Policy, Department of Higher Education and Training, 2019;
- 1.8 King IV Report on Corporate Governance, 2016 (King IV);
- 1.9 Statute of the North-West University;
- 1.10 codes, standards and frameworks governing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) at the NWU;
- 1.11 policies of the NWU relating to ICT, academic integrity, ethics, intellectual property and discipline;
- 1.12 .NWU Information Strategy and Framework for Information Governance ([NWU Information Governance Framework](#)), and
- 1.13 The South Africa National AI Policy Framework, 2024.

### **2 Definitions**

- 2.1 The glossary of terms relating to Artificial Intelligence contained in Annexure 1 is an integral part of this policy.
- 2.2 Annexures 1, 2 and 3 to this policy may be amended and extended by the University Management Committee (UMC) in conformity with this policy, on the advice of the Information Technology Committee (ITCom). Any such amendments must be tabled before the Council for noting and review if deemed necessary.

### **3 Policy statement**

- 3.1 Given the expectation that AI will become increasingly integrated into all activities of the University, this policy must guide its human-centred, ethical, sustainable, lawful, and effective use, manage related risks, and enable innovation that benefits students, employees, and the wider community.
- 3.2 AI tools must be used ethically to ensure that they do not propagate biases or violate privacy standards. They must be used transparently and in a manner that does not violate anyone’s rights.

- 3.3 Guidelines for the ethical use of AI by employees and students must be integrated into the teaching, learning, and research practices of the University.
- 3.4 Guidelines must be developed to promote interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, and transdisciplinary research involving AI.
- 3.5 Standards and protocols for the use of AI by students and employees must be developed to protect copyright and academic integrity in all activities of the University
- 3.6 The NWU is committed to the ethical development and implementation of AI technologies in accordance with the following basic principles:
- 3.7 *Human value alignment*: AI must be applied in a way that is consistent with the NWU's values, ethics, integrity and societal norms to ensure decisions and actions that benefit humanity;
- 3.8 *Transparency and honesty*: AI systems and the decision-making processes behind them must be used openly and honestly to prevent AI-related risks;
- 3.9 *Accountability*: responsibility must be taken for the use of AI by ensuring that mechanisms are in place to address any issues, biases or risks;
- 3.10 *Privacy*: personal data must be safeguarded, and user privacy must be respected in all AI applications;
- 3.11 *Security and safety*: the security and privacy of the AI data processing and the content generated thereby must be ensured. Continuous research and adaptation must be undertaken to identify new vulnerabilities and risks introduced by generative AI and to develop countermeasures;
- 3.12 *Fairness and non-discrimination*: biases must be eliminated by ensuring that all individuals and groups are treated fairly by AI systems;
- 3.13 *Reliability*: the consistent performance of AI systems as expected must be ensured to deliver accurate and stable outcomes in various conditions. The integrity of the University's data must be maintained in administrative processes, teaching-learning, research practices and other initiatives to ensure high-quality, dependable output, and
- 3.14 *Sustainability*: awareness and caution regarding the environmental impact, carbon footprint, and energy and water usage of large AI models must be promoted.
- 3.15 The NWU must continuously identify and manage the many risks associated with the general and specific application of AI through its risk management processes.
- 3.16 The benefits that AI can add to the NWU must be fostered by continuously considering the potential value proposition of AI as a resource in the higher education setting. This involves leveraging the benefits and strengths of AI technologies while considering its drawbacks, weaknesses and threats, through ongoing risk/cost benefit analyses and value decisions.
- 3.17 The NWU's approach to and policy on AI must continually be reviewed and adapted to ensure that it remains relevant in response to technological advancements.

## 4 Management of the policy

- 4.1 The Technology and Information Governance Committee of the Council (TIGovCom) advises the Council on the implementation of the policy and the relevant strategies to be pursued, as well as monitoring the effective and efficient management of the policy.
- 4.2 The UMC creates a business environment conducive to realising the policy and oversees its management in all relevant university pursuits and activities, as advised by the Information Technology Committee (ITCom).
- 4.3 The NWU AI Hub and the AI Steering Committee (AISC), responsible to the ITCom, fulfils an agency role across the NWU to ensure institution-wide take up and implementation of this policy and related business processes.

## 5 Roles and responsibilities for creating an environment conducive to the realisation of the policy

- 5.1 **The AI Steering Committee (AISC)** fulfils an overarching coordinating role to ensure alignment and resolution in accordance with the NWU policy governance structures and is responsible for developing mechanisms to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of AI tools, policies, and stakeholder feedback. The AISC is also responsible for identifying and including all relevant AI stakeholders at the NWU.
- 5.2 **The AI Hub** is responsible for developing and implementing the Council-approved AI Strategy, reporting to the AISC. The purpose and role of the AI Hub are detailed in Annexure 2 of this policy for context and information.
- 5.3 **The Registrar** is the custodian of academic integrity and remains responsible for developing academic integrity rules for the ethical and responsible use of AI within the framework of this policy as owner of the Academic Integrity Policy. The AI Hub and AISC fulfil an advisory role to the Registrar in this regard.
- 5.4 **The ITCom** is responsible for developing guidelines and rules for acquiring and using AI tools, and for advising the UMC accordingly. Information relating to the use of AI tools is provided in Annexure 3 of this policy for purposes of context and information.
- 5.5 **Faculties** remain responsible for ensuring that AI training of students and academic staff within the teaching and learning environment takes place in collaboration with the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) and the AI Hub.
- 5.6 **Faculty management Committees** are responsible for ensuring that postgraduate students and researchers receive training on the use of AI in research and must collaborate with the Research Support Office and the AI Hub.
- 5.7 **The AI Hub and ITCom** fulfil an advisory role on operational and administrative matters to support the use of AI by employees. Continuous professional development training in this regard must be provided by CTL, People and Culture and the Digital Academy, in consultation with the AI Hub.

File reference: 5P\_5.10

**Annexure 1**
**GLOSSARY OF TERMS RELATING TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)**

“Academic integrity”	The adherence to the ethics of honest scholarship in teaching, learning and research practices, as well as the ability to work independently; to give credit to the ideas of others and the reuse of one’s own previous work, not plagiarising, fabricating or falsifying any aspect related to data, and the submission of original research products for assessment, examination and review.
“Artificial Intelligence”	The development and deployment of computer systems or sophisticated algorithms with the capabilities to perform tasks that would typically require human intelligence. These systems can analyse large amounts of data, identify patterns, make predictions, learn from experience, and automate complex processes.
“Unethical use of Artificial Intelligence”	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 The inappropriate or unethical application of artificial intelligence, which includes using Artificial Intelligence to deceive or manipulate, and the implementation of Artificial Intelligence systems without proper transparency or attribution during assessment, examination or research.</li> <li>2 The appropriation or unethical application of Artificial Intelligence also includes the fabrication, falsification or plagiarism of data, text, sources, and multimodal artefacts.</li> <li>3 Unauthorised training of Artificial Intelligence on protected data, proprietary information, intellectual property or copyright-protected information.</li> </ol>
“Ethical use of Artificial Intelligence”	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 The application of Artificial Intelligence in a manner that is transparent, in that clear attribution is given to the use of Artificial Intelligence models, systems, or algorithms during the production of assessments, examinations, or research, and which adheres to faculty-specific Artificial Intelligence ethics and use guidelines.</li> <li>2 Artificial Intelligence may be used as a language editor, provided it does not rewrite significant portions of text, thereby resulting in Artificial Intelligence plagiarism.</li> <li>3 Adherence to faculty-specific Artificial Intelligence guidelines or those set by lecturers.</li> </ol>
“Artificial Intelligence-generated plagiarism”	Using Artificial Intelligence-based language models to generate content or paraphrasing sources and passing it off as one’s own formulated text.
“Artificial Intelligence writing/content detection”	The use of Artificial Intelligence algorithms and tools to detect instances of Artificial Intelligence-generated plagiarism or unauthorised Artificial Intelligence-generated content.

File reference: 5P\_5.10

**Annexure 2**
**NWU ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) HUB**
**Background**

The establishment of the NWU AI Hub within the DVC Operations, Digital & AI Systems portfolio was proposed at the University Management Council’s Bosberaad at the end of 2024 and came into effect on 1 January 2025. The AI Hub was officially launched on 17 March 2025 on the Vanderbijlpark Campus.

The AI Hub plays a vital role within Information Technology’s (IT) vision “to be a leading partner in positioning the NWU as a unitary institution of superior academic excellence through Digital Transformation”. In terms of the NWU’s strategic plan, the AI Hub concretely realises the vision to “discover new frontiers and opportunities that benefit society, thereby advancing our relevance and impact” and our mission: “To benefit society through the provision of knowledge, excelling in innovative teaching, cutting-edge research and focused engagement with the community.”

**Purpose and governance of the AI Hub**

The AI Hub is the NWU’s central office and platform for implementing the AI Policy and Strategy. It supports AI initiatives and provides guidance and coordination to ensure the effective, ethical, and responsible use of AI across the University. The Hub is led by the Director, who reports functionally to the AI Steering Committee (AISC) and administratively to the Director of the NWU Digital Academy.

**Role and responsibilities of the AI Hub**

The AI Hub’s main responsibilities and tasks are:

1. to implement and manage the AI Policy and Strategy in the most efficient, practical and effective way possible;
2. to support the AI Steering Committee in fulfilling its roles and responsibilities as set out in its terms of reference;
3. to provide a centralised point of contact and platform within the NWU for the implementation and management of the NWU AI policy and strategy;
4. to support AI initiatives and provide guidance and coordination for the effective, ethical and responsible use of AI at the NWU;
5. to keep up to date with the latest AI developments and their impact on higher education;
6. to compile and manage an annual budget for the activities of the AI Hub;
7. to report quarterly to the AISC and annually to the ITCOM;
8. to ensure that the NWU AI Policy and Strategy remains relevant and maintains a human-centric approach;
9. to position the AI Hub as a national and international leading entity and to implement best practices in this regard;
10. to fulfil these tasks in the following three categories:

<i>Leadership, management and administration tasks:</i>	Provide advice on all aspects of AI at the NWU as and when needed. Prioritise the tasks of the AISC and the AI Hub accordingly. Keep the AISC agendas, minutes, and action points up to date and ensure they are implemented. Arrange the AISC and other ad hoc meetings as required.
---	--

	<p>Ensure sufficient membership on AISC and invite experts as needed.</p> <p>Meet regularly with the IT Chief Director and the Director of the Digital Academy.</p> <p>Conduct research into AI development in higher education, nationally and internationally.</p> <p>Provide advice on the need for and use of AI licences at the NWU. This will involve exploring different AI products and organising presentations by relevant companies.</p> <p>Make a concerted effort to bridge the digital divide in implementing AI.</p> <p>Explore ways to generate an income for the AI Hub from sources such as industry, SOTL funds, CTL, and SETA funds for training.</p> <p>Direct all issues relating to the ownership, licensing and commercialisation of AI tools, datasets and ancillary creative outputs to TTIS (Technology Transfer Innovation Services), in order to clarify how the intellectual property and monetisation of university-created AI tools will be governed – including staff/student contributions.</p> <p>The director should attend national and international conferences to learn more about AI and organise AI conferences at the NWU as required.</p> <p>Collaborate with the Digital Academy (within IT), which is responsible for all digital skills development initiatives for staff. Although CTL and the Research Office will be responsible for training academics and researchers, the Digital Academy will also play a role in this training.</p> <p>Develop a training framework for academic and support staff at the NWU. Collaborate with the Digital Academy, CTL and P&amp;C in this regard.</p>
<p><i>Teaching and learning, and research support:</i></p>	<p>Conduct research into AI competencies and requirements at NWU, creating suitable training materials to address these.</p> <p>Create AI guidelines for students, academic staff and support staff as required.</p> <p>Collaborate with CTL and other individuals and departments to develop training material and opportunities in the teaching and learning environment for students and lecturers.</p> <p>Collaborate with Research and Postgraduate Studies, Library and Information Service and the Research Support Office and other stakeholders to develop training material and opportunities for postgraduate students and research on how to use AI in research.</p> <p>Attend AI conferences on TL and research, and present these best practices to the NWU through workshops, colloquiums and training sessions.</p> <p>Identify the most relevant AI conferences nationally and internationally and encourage relevant individuals to attend these conferences.</p> <p>Attend SCTL and report on AI matters as a standing item on the SCTL and Senate agendas.</p> <p>Assist with presentations and workshops on AI and TL, e.g. AI and assessments, AI and outcomes, and AI and curriculum development.</p> <p>Assist with strategic thinking and planning regarding AI and research.</p> <p>Assist with the continuous development of ethical and responsible guidelines for the use of AI at the NWU.</p> <p>Organise ad hoc AI lecture series, panel discussions, forums and other academic events to critically engage with AI.</p> <p>Help CTL organise AI Brown Bag Lunches – Lunch and Learn opportunities.</p> <p>Establish an AI Community of Practice (CoP) for lecturers focusing on TL and research to share best practice and to learn from each other.</p> <p>Collaborate with the Digital Academy, CTL and others to assess AI training and courses available on the internet and at other universities, to determine whether they meet the NWU's needs.</p> <p>Help to develop an innovation team (with CTL, research and from various faculties) to develop AI skills internally and to be able to provide training on AI and 1) the development of tutor bots, 2) videos and images, 3) critical thinking, 4) writing skills and support, 5) data and security management, 6) academic integrity, 7) digital literacy and productivity tools, 8) AI in postgraduate studies and research, 9) AI in teaching and learning, assessment, marking, feedback, etc.</p>

<p><b>Liaison, communication, and community engagement:</b></p>	<p>Collaborate with CRM to promote AI-related developments and activities within the NWU</p> <p>Create partnerships with industry to develop our own AI capabilities and to serve the community.</p> <p>Organise and showcase the work that is already being done with AI at the NWU.</p> <p><i>Create visibility about AI activities at the NWU, both internally and externally.</i></p> <p>Ensure that internal liaison with students and staff occurs as needed on all campuses.</p> <p>Act as an external university liaison between service providers and clients.</p> <p>Take responsibility for updating the AI@NWU webpage – ensure all relevant AI resources and documents are available and that all AI training opportunities and events are listed, etc.</p> <p>Ensure the effective communication of AI matters via NWU communication channels, IT’s communication platforms and the NWU Corporate Relations and Marketing department.</p> <p>Liaise with the Office of the Registrar on matters of academic integrity and AI, e.g. the regular updating of AIITSA, IRIMS and the Academic Integrity Policy.</p> <p>Explore ways to engage with the community on AI-related issues, e.g. through media reports, radio, interviews, publications, talks at schools and businesses.</p> <p>Collaborate with other universities and the AI Circle of South Africa in Higher Education (AICSA) to build AI networks within the NWU, nationally and internationally.</p> <p>Investigate opportunities to commercialise in-house AI products, such as the AI student course and the AI assessment course for lecturers.</p> <p>Consider technology awards for excellent AI use at the NWU, e.g. for creative AI use by staff and/or students. Ask for nominations and award an AI Star of the Month/Quarter for use of AI that benefits education.</p> <p>Create an environment in which we focus not only on using and consuming AI software and tools from industry, but also on developing these tools ourselves as a university. We should create opportunities so that we become the AI producers and developers, taking the lead in Africa in this regard.</p>
---	---

**The role and responsibilities of the director of the AI Hub**

The Director of the AI Hub is responsible for the implementation of the NWU AI Strategy, and for the development, management, roles and responsibilities of the AI Hub. In the absence of the DVC with the assigned function of IT, the Director will chair the AI Steering Committee. The coordination and implementation of all AI-related matters at the NWU will be the directors’ responsibility.

**Conclusion**

The roles and responsibilities section of the AISC refers to the AI Hub as playing a crucial role in strengthening the NWU’s commitment to embracing responsible, beneficial and vision-aligned AI technologies, while continuing to identify inclusive, ethical and sustainable AI opportunities.

File reference: 5P\_5.10

**Annexure 3****USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) TOOLS****Information restricted for use in AI tools** *(communicated by IT on 09/04/2025)*

1. PERSONAL DATA. First and last name, Address, Email address, Phone number, Other identifiable personal details.
2. SENSITIVE PERSONAL DATA. Identity Number (ID), Passport Number, Location data, Financial data (e.g. income, purchasing behaviour).
3. ACADEMIC INFORMATION. Student Marks, Research in progress, Examination and test papers.
4. SPECIAL CATEGORIES OF PERSONAL DATA. Race or ethnicity, Sexual behaviour or sexual orientation, Political views, Religious or philosophical beliefs, Membership of a trade union, Health and medical data, Genetic data, Biometric data.
5. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS INFORMATION. Corporate strategies, Trade secrets, Internal project details, Financial reports and forecasts, Staff or student data.
6. LEGAL INFORMATION. Legal advice and discussions, Information related to ongoing legal cases, Confidential contracts or agreements.
7. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY. Unpublished research, Patents or patent applications, Copyrighted material (without proper authorisation).
8. SECURITY INFORMATION. Network data, Security protocols, Vulnerability reports, Documents containing architecture or infrastructure details, Configuration documents.
9. INAPPROPRIATE OR ILLEGAL CONTENT. Hate speech, Illegal activities, Content that violates privacy laws.

Original details: (10225676) C:\Users\User\NWUNextcloud\Finale beleide vir web\AI POLICY\5P\_5.10\_AI policy.docm  
19 November 2025

File reference: 5P\_5.10